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U.S. Designates Five Charities Funding Hamas and Six Senior Hamas Leaders as Terrorist Entities

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FROM THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Present Bush today announced that the U.S. Treasury is designating five Hamas related charities and six senior Hamas leaders as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs), freezing any assets in the U.S. and prohibiting transactions with U.S. nationals. ♦By claiming responsibility for the despicable act of terror on August 19, Hamas has reaffirmed that it is a terrorist organization committed to violence against Israelis and to undermining progress toward peace between Israel and the Palestinian people, ♦President Bush stated.

♦Hamas ♦ leaders and those who provide their funding again have the blood of innocents on their hands, ♦ U.S. Treasury Secretary John Snow stated. ♦Empty words cannot wash them clean. As they resist the road map for peace, Hamas is devastating the dreams of the Palestinian people for freedom, prosperity, and an independent state. ♦

The United States will continue to work with our allies to encourage the recognition of Hamas as a terrorist organization and to shut down their sources of funding and support.

The following individuals are designated as SDGTs by today ♦s action:

1. **Sheik Ahmed Yassin**, the leader of Hamas in Gaza.
2. **Imad Khalil Al-Alami**, a member of the Hamas Political Bureau in Damascus, Syria.
3. **Usama Hamdan**, a senior Hamas leader in Lebanon.
4. **Khalid Mishaal**, head of the Hamas Political Bureau and Executive Committee in Damascus, Syria.
5. **Musa Abu Marzouk**, Deputy Chief of the Political Bureau in Syria.
6. **Abdel Aziz Rantisi**, a Hamas leader in Gaza reporting to Sheik Yassin.

The following charities that provide support to Hamas and form part of its funding network in Europe are designated as well:

1. **Comité de Bienfaisance et de Secours aux Palestiniens (CBSP)**, of France.
2. **The Association de Secours Palestinien (ASP)**, of Switzerland. (An organization related to CBSP)
3. **The Palestinian Relief and Development Fund, or Interpal**, headquartered in the United Kingdom.
4. **The Palestinian Association in Austria**, PVOE.
5. **The Sanabil Association for Relief and Development**, based in Lebanon .

Today’s action follows several actions taken against Hamas previously, including the designation of several entities that formed part of the Hamas network such as Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development and the Al Aqsa Foundation, key sources of financial support for Hamas.

ATTACHED: Fact Sheet

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Fact Sheet

HAMAS

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HAMAS is a terrorist organization that has intentionally killed hundreds of innocent civilians and continues to kill and maim with the aim of terrorizing a civilian population. HAMAS was formed in 1987 as an outgrowth of the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. HAMAS activists have conducted many attacks including large-scale suicide bombings against Israeli citizens and military targets. In the early 1990s, they also targeted U.S. citizens, suspected Palestinian collaborators and Fatah rivals.

During 2002, more than 370 persons including 10 US citizens were killed in Israel, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip by acts of terrorism. HAMAS was responsible for carrying out more than 50 of these attacks, including shootings, suicide bombings, and standoff mortar-and-rocket attacks against civilian and military targets. The group was responsible for the most deadly Palestinian terrorist attack of the year the suicide bombings of a Passover gathering at a Netanya hotel that killed 29 Israelis, including one dual US-Israeli citizen. HAMAS’s bombing of a cafeteria on the Hebrew University campus, which killed nine, including five US citizens, demonstrated its willingness to stage operations in areas frequented by students and tourists, including US citizens.

In addition, HAMAS’s rejectionist policies and terrorist actions are aimed at derailing the peace process in the Middle East. On April 30, 2003, the U.S. government released the roadmap for peace between Israel and the Palestinians, which constitutes a crucial step in international efforts to actively support movement towards peace in the region. HAMAS, however, has since the mid-90s purposefully worked against all regional peace efforts by engaging in suicide attacks and other acts of the most violent type of terrorism. On June 8 and June 11 HAMAS took credit for attacks against Israelis. The organization also took credit for four suicide bombings in a 24-hour period during the weekend preceding May 20th.

On June 29th, HAMAS and two other designated terrorist groups announced a cease-fire. On August 19th, a suicide bomber detonated his bomb in the back of a double-length city bus near the border between east and west Jerusalem. According to a CNN report, HAMAS said that it was committed to the cease-fire, but also claimed responsibility, stating that ♦the man was a member of its military wing, the Izzedine al-Qassam Brigades, and the attack came in revenge for the killing of two of its members.♦ As noted by the Human Rights Watch, ♦the Hamas leadership has pursued attacks against civilians as a conscious policy. A group that pursues multiple, intentional attacks against civilians as a matter of policy is responsible for crimes against humanity.♦ *Erased in a Moment: Suicide Bombing Attacks Against Israeli Civilians* at 67 (October 2002).

Under Executive Order 13224, the United States government may block the assets of HAMAS (which it has done) and the assets of individuals and entities owned or controlled by; acting for or on behalf of; or providing support, financial or otherwise, to designated terrorists and terrorist organizations. HAMAS has been designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (66 Fed. Reg. 51088) and as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) under Executive Order 13224, "Blocking Property and Prohibiting Transactions with Persons who Commit, or Support Terrorism.♦

The United States government has credible evidence that the following six HAMAS leaders that command and control terrorist activity.

Sheik Ahmed YASSIN

Yassin is the head of HAMAS in Gaza. He maintains a direct line of communication with other HAMAS leaders on coordination of HAMAS's military activities and openly admits that there is no distinguishing the political and military wings of Hamas. Yassin

also conveys messages about operational planning to other Palestinian terrorist organizations.

Surrounding Y

assin is an entourage of personal "bodyguards," including many implicated in providing information and supplies to fugitives, recruiting personnel to undertake military operations, planning terrorist cells, attacking settlements, and manufacturing weapons and explosives.

I

mad Khalil AL-ALAMI

Imad al-Alami is a member of HAMAS's Political Bureau, located in Damascus, Syria and a military operations leader. As part of

Hamas's external leadership, but is part of its military and police wing of Hamas because it controls the West Bank and prison branches of Hamas and has gained total financial control.

Al-Alami has had oversight responsibility for the military wing of Hamas within the Palestinian territories. As a Hamas military leader, al-Alami directs sending personnel and funding to the West Bank and Gaza.

U

sama HAMDAN

Hamdan, a senior Hamas official based in Lebanon, maintains contact with representatives with other terrorist organizations with the purpose of strengthening the ties between these organizations in order to strengthen an international Islamic Jihad. He has worked with other Hamas and Hizballah leaders on initiatives to develop and activate the military network inside the Palestinian territories in support of the current intifada, including the movement of weapons, explosives and personnel to the West Bank and Gaza for Hamas fighters.

Funds transferred from charitable donations to Hamas for distribution to the families of Palestinian ♦martyrs♦ have been transferred to the bank account of Hamdan and used to support Hamas military operations in Israel.

Khalid MISHAAL

Mishaal is the chief of Hamas's Political Bureau in Damascus, Syria and heads Hamas's Executive Committee and Special Office. Cells in the military wing based in the West Bank that are under Mishaal's control have been implicated in efforts by Hamas to plan large attacks that would undermine the "road map" peace plan.

Mishaal has been responsible for supervising assassination operations, bombings and the killing of Israeli settlers. To execute Hamas military activities, Mishaal maintains a direct link to Gaza-based Hamas leader, Abdel Aziz Rantisi (see below). He also provides instructions to other parts of the Hamas military wing.

Funds transferred from charitable donations to Hamas for distribution to the families of Palestinian martyrs have been transferred to the bank account of Mishaal and used to support Hamas military operations in Israel.

Musa Abu MARZOUK

Musa Abu Marzouk is the Deputy Chief of HAMAS's Political Bureau based in Damascus, Syria. His activities include directing and coordinating terrorist acts by HAMAS against soldiers and civilians in Israel and the West Bank and Gaza. Marzouk maintains relationships with other terrorist organizations.

The Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, designated as an SDGT under EO 13224 in December 2001 based on its support of HAMAS, received start-up funding and instructions from Marzouk. Marzouk is implicated in receiving financing for HAMAS terrorist attacks, funds that have been used to mobilize military activity inside Israel and the West Bank/Gaza.

Abdel Aziz RANTISI

Rantisi is part of the HAMAS leadership in Gaza, operating directly under HAMAS Leader Shaykh Yassin (*see above*) with whom he maintains a direct line of communication for the coordination of military operations. Mishaal (*see above*) has also issued orders for HAMAS terrorist activities through R

antisi.

In October of 2002, Rantisi was reported in Al-Hayat as personally claiming responsibility for the assassination of a Palestinian Authority Police Colonel. In December 2002, he was calling for Iraq to prepare thousands of martyrdom cells to fight the United States and its allies in the event of war.

HAMAS Fundraising

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HAMAS raises tens of millions of dollars per year throughout the world using charitable fundraising as cover. While HAMAS may provide money for legitimate charitable work, this work is a primary recruiting tool for the organization's militant causes. HAMAS relies on donations from Palestinian expatriates around the world and private benefactors located in moderate Arab states, Western Europe and North America. HAMAS uses a web of charities to facilitate funding and to funnel money. Charitable donations to non-governmental organizations are commingled, moved between charities in ways that hide the money trail, and then often diverted or siphoned to support terrorism.

The funds pouring into HAMAS coffers directly undermine the Middle East peace process. These funds allow the group to continue to foment violence, strengthen its terrorist infrastructure, and undermine responsible leadership.

The political leadership of HAMAS directs its terrorist networks just as they oversee their other activities. HAMAS leader Yassin confirms this relationship, stating to al-Sharq al-Awsat on August 12, 2002: "When we make decisions on the political level and convey them to the military wing, it abides by it normally.♦ The intensity of this relationship is reflected in Yassin's words quoted by Reuters on May 12, 1998:

We can not separate the wing from the body. If we do so, the body will not be able to fly. HAMAS is one body.

A report issued by Human Rights Watch has also noted the unified nature of HAMAS:

In the case of Hamas, there is abundant evidence that the military wing is accountable to a political steering committee Yassin himself, as well as Salah Shehadah, the late founder and commander of the ♦Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, have confirmed in public remarks that the military wing implements policies that are set by the political wing.♦ *Erased in a Moment: Suicide Bombing Attacks Against Israeli Civilians* at 63 (October 2002).

Fundraising may involve community solicitation in the United States, Canada, Europe and the Middle East or solicitations directly to wealthy donors. While some donors may be aware of the intended use of their donations, too many innocent donors who intend for their money to be used to provide humanitarian services here or abroad, are unwittingly funding acts of violence when these funds are diverted to terrorist causes.

HAMAS fundraising directly undermines Prime Minister Mahmud Abbas's ability to clamp down on this terrorist organization. One of the obstacles and threats to establishing a meaningful dialogue toward peace comes from terrorist groups such as HAMAS, which view peace discussions as inimical to their interests and are intent on undermining the multilateral work on the roadmap by fomenting violence. In order to support momentum towards peace, to strengthen the ability of the new Palestinian leadership to take the actions it must take against HAMAS, the assets of groups like HAMAS must be frozen, as well as the assets of organizations raising funds for such terrorist groups.

E.O. 13224 provides a means to disrupt the financial-support network funding terrorist attacks committed by HAMAS. Under this Order, the United States government may block the assets of HAMAS (which it has done) and the assets of individuals and entities owned or controlled by; acting for or on behalf of; or providing support, financial or otherwise, to designated terrorists and terrorist organizations. HAMAS has been designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (66 Fed. Reg. 51088) and as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) under Executive Order 13224, "Blocking Property and Prohibiting Transactions with Persons who Commit, or Support Terrorism.◆

The United States government has credible evidence that the following five organizations are part of a web of charities raising funds on behalf of HAMAS and using humanitarian purposes as a cover for acts that support HAMAS. Funds are generated by, and flow through, these organizations on behalf of HAMAS.

C

Comite de Bienfaisance et de Secours aux Palestiniens (CBSP) and Association de Secours Palestinien (ASP)

CBSP and ASP are primary fundraisers for HAMAS in France and Switzerland, respectively. Founded in France in the late 80s/early 90s, CBSP acts in collaboration with more than a dozen humanitarian organizations based in different towns in the West Bank and Gaza and in Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan and Lebanon. ASP, a subsidiary of CBSP, was founded in Switzerland in 1994. The group has collected large amounts of money from mosques and Islamic centers, which it then transfers to sub-organizations of HAMAS. Khalid Al-S

huli is the president of CBSP and ASP .

Palestinian Relief and Development Fund (I

nterpal)

Interpal, headquartered in the UK, has been a principal charity utilized to hide the flow of money to HAMAS. Reporting indicates it is the conduit through which money flows to HAMAS from other charities, *e.g.*, the Al Aqsa Foundation (designated under EO 13224 on May 29th) and oversees the activities of other charities. For example, the Sanabil Association for Relief and Development (designated as part of this tranche), represents Interpal in Lebanon. Reporting indicates that Interpal is the fundraising coordinator of HAMAS. This role is of the type that includes supervising activities of charities, developing new charities in targeted areas, instructing how funds should be transferred from one charity to another, and even determining public relations policy.

Palestinian Association in Austria (PVOE)

PVOE is controlled by the leader of HAMAS in Austria. The money is targeted to support members of HAMAS and is funneled through other charities in Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza or other areas of the Middle East in order to ensure the transfer of funds is undetected and reaches its intended recipients. PVOE is part of the HAMAS net work of charitable organizations that includes the Al Aqsa Foundation.

S

anabil Association for Relief and Development

The Sanabil Association for Relief and Development (Sanabil), based in Sidon, Lebanon, receives large quantities of funds raised by major HAMAS-affiliated charities in Europe and the Middle East and, in turn, provides funding to HAMAS. For example, Sanabil has received funding from the Al Aqsa Foundation (designated as an SDGT under EO 13224 in May 2003); the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development (designated as an SDGT under EO 13224 in December 2001), and Interpal (designated as an SDGT under EO 13224 as part of this tranche). HAMAS recruits permanent members from the religious and the poor by extending charity to them from organizations such as S

anabil.

At the request of a HAMAS political leader, Sanabil began opening offices in all of the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon in August of 2001 in order to increase the foundation's role inside the camps. After starting by providing basic necessities the charity eventually began asking poor families within the camps to fill out application forms, particularly those who had worked with the Islamic Movement (Al-Haraka al-Islamiyya) and HAMAS. As a result of these efforts, S

anabil has increased its scope of influence within the camps.

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